

# PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:

see form PCT/SA/220

**PCT**

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY  
(PCT Rule 43bis.1)**

Date of mailing  
(day/month/year) see form PCT/SA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference  
see form PCT/SA/220

**FOR FURTHER ACTION**  
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.  
PCT/GB2005/000427

International filing date (day/month/year)  
07.02.2005

Priority date (day/month/year)  
07.02.2004

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC  
C02F5/00

Applicant  
RECKITT BENCKISER N.V.

**1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:**

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the International application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the International application

**2. FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for International preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/SA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/SA/220.

**3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/SA/220.**

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



European Patent Office  
D-80298 Munich  
Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx. 523656 epmu d  
Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465

Authorized Officer

Serra, R

Telephone No. +49 89 2399-5976



---

**Box No. I Basis of the opinion**

---

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.  
 This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
  - a. **type of material:**  
 a sequence listing  
 table(s) related to the sequence listing
  - b. **format of material:**  
 in written format  
 in computer readable form
  - c. **time of filing/furnishing:**  
 contained in the international application as filed.  
 filed together with the international application in computer readable form.  
 furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3.  In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

---

**Box No. II Priority**

---

1.  The validity of the priority claim has not been considered because the International Searching Authority does not have in its possession a copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed or, where required, a translation of that earlier application. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date (Rules 43bis.1 and 64.1) is the claimed priority date.
2.  This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43bis.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.

3. Additional observations, if necessary:

**Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43b/s.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or  
industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-11
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-11
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-11
	No: Claims	

**2. Citations and explanations**

**see separate sheet**

**Re Item V.**

- 1 Reference is made to the following document:  
D1 : WO 02/18280 A (RECKITT BENCKISER LIMITED; MCKECHNIE, MALCOLM, TOM; CORNELIUS, GAY, J) 7 March 2002 (2002-03-07)
- 2 Document D1 discloses (see the claims): a method of cleaning comprising softening water with an insoluble water softening agent contained in a container permeable to the water.

The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of independent claims 1, 5, 11 does not involve an inventive step in the sense of Article 33(3) PCT.

The document D1 is regarded as being the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claims 1, 5, 11, and discloses (see claim 14) a method of providing improved cleaning in a clothes washing machine, wherein a container containing a substantially water-insoluble sequestrant having a wall permeable to water and to metal ions therein but impermeable to the sequestrant is located in the loading drawer of the machine such that inflowing rinse water flows through the container, thereby effecting the softening of rinse water entering the machine.

- 2.1 The subject-matter of claims 1, 5, 11 therefore differs from this known D1 in that:

The container comprising the water softening agents is stored and removed prior to use from a packaging having a MVTR < 30 g/m<sup>2</sup>/day.

The problem to be solved by the present invention may therefore be regarded as to protect the container and the agent from moisture.

The solution of providing an impermeable packaging thus having a MVTR < 30 g/m<sup>2</sup>/day for protecting anything from moisture is merely one of several straightforward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, in accordance with circumstances, without the exercise of inventive skill, in order to solve the problem posed.

Claim 1 is therefore not inventive. The same applies to claims 5 and 11.

**3 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-4, 6-10**

Dependent claims 2-4, 6-10 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step (Article 33(2) and (3) PCT).